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## Items of Interest:

**DoD to participate in Russian HIV/AIDS Workshop.** The Department of Defense announced that it will co-sponsor a four-day Military HIV/AIDS Prevention Workshop with the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense from Sept. 12-15 in Moscow. Although the global HIV/AIDS pandemic has been largely concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa, the HIV infection rate in Eurasia is one of the fastest growing in the world. DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program, which is the workshop's co-sponsor, has been working with non-U.S. militaries for the past five years in an effort to combat the spread of the deadly AIDS pandemic. This workshop will focus on reducing the rate of HIV/AIDS infection in participating militaries.

# Navy and Marine Corps Medical News

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## President Bush Visits Naval Medical Center San Diego

By JO1 (SW) Joshua Smith, Naval Medical Center San Diego Public Affairs

**NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER SAN DIEGO** - President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush visited Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCS D), Aug. 30, to thank Sailors and Marines for their contributions to the War on Terrorism.

When they arrived, President Bush and the First Lady were greeted by NMCS D's commander, Rear Adm. Brian G. Brannman, who escorted them into the center where the President spoke to a group of Sailors who served aboard the Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19). The ship was deployed in support of Operation Unified Assistance, the nation's commitment to the tsunami relief effort in Southeast Asia.

President Bush then addressed a group of hospital corpsmen who served meritoriously in Operation Iraqi Freedom, presenting one, Hospital Corpsman Alonso A. Rogero, with a Purple Heart for wounds received while serving with Kilo Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion/5<sup>th</sup> Marines during Operation Phantom Fury in Fallujah, Iraq.

"Being awarded the Purple Heart from the President was an event beyond description. I felt overwhelmed that he took the time to award me with such a prestigious award," said Rogero. "Meeting a man like our President and knowing that he acknowledges the importance of a corpsman's job in the field with the Marines only feeds the motivation and courage I have for fighting for our nation."

The President then visited the medical center's physical therapy department where he met with Navy SEALs and Marines wounded



**NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER SAN DIEGO-** President George W. Bush holds Purple Heart citation for Hospital Corpsman Alonso A. Rogero's uniform during a recent visit to Naval Medical Center San Diego. The President presented Rogero with the award for wounds received while serving with Kilo Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion/5<sup>th</sup> Marines during Operation Phantom Fury in Fallujah, Iraq. U.S. Navy photo by Tim Scully

in Operation Iraqi Freedom who receive treatment there.

"I believe it's very important for the Commander in Chief to visit wounded Marines who are recuperating here at NMCS D," said Sgt. Sargent, wounded while serving in Fallujah. "It really meant a lot to the guys, especially the younger ones."

Before departing, President Bush gave one young Marine, Lance Cpl. Ivan Floresgarcia a special honor by presenting him with American citizenship.

## Naval Hospital Bremerton Staff Departs for Kuwait

By Journalist 2nd Class Fletcher Gibson, Naval Hospital Bremerton Public Affairs

**NAVAL HOSPITAL BREMER-  
TON, Wash.** - Nearly 40 staff members from Naval Hospital (NH) Bremerton left Sept. 4, bound for the U.S. Military Hospital in Kuwait, where they will serve for approximately six months in direct support of combat operations in Iraq.

A second group of about 35 will join this group of hospital corpsmen, dental technicians, physicians, nurses, dental officers, and support staff when they deploy in late October, said Capt. Mark Boman, executive officer NH Bremerton.

The team assembled before dawn at the hospital, where friends and family members gave last-minute well wishes and final good-byes before the 4 a.m. departure.

Capt. Bill Roberts, Naval Hospital Bremerton commanding officer, greeted and spoke with departing Sailors individually. To the assem-

bled group, he gave one piece of parting advice.

"Take care of your patients, take care of each other, and we'll have you back here in a few months," he said.

The bus took the deploying officers and Sailors to SeaTac International Airport near Seattle, where they were scheduled to fly to Camp Pendleton, Calif., near San Diego. There they will receive several days of additional training before making the trip to Kuwait.

"These people are ready to go," Boman said. "They're trained, they're motivated, and there is no doubt in my mind they'll do a great job."

The deployed Bremerton personnel will treat injured Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines from the Iraqi area of operations. They will also screen and treat service members assigned and traveling to and from Iraq via Kuwait.

Boman said the deploying personnel will be near enough to the

war to help the combatants yet far enough away to avoid combat hostilities in Iraq.

NH Bremerton and its clinics at Naval Base Kitsap Bangor, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Naval Station Everett continue to keep 10-15 hospital corpsmen and nurses deployed to Iraq at any given time. However, the deployment to Kuwait is the largest since Fleet Hospital Bremerton deployed more than 300 people to Rota, Spain in 2003.

The service members deploying to U.S. Military Hospital Kuwait will relieve the 300-plus Naval Reservists from Fleet Hospital Dallas who have staffed the hospital and its nine clinics throughout Kuwait for the past year.



**MAJURO, Marshall Islands** - A Marshallese boy is treated by Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Charles McMahon at a health fair provided by Sailors assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (LHD 4). Boxer's visit to the island gave the Sailors and Marines a chance to conduct a community outreach program and experience Marshallese culture as well as provide some much-needed assistance in the form of medical aid, education, construction and repairs to schools and other buildings. *U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Christopher Elmini*

## Intercultural Nursing Program offers Japanese Students View of American Nursing

By Amanda M. Woodhead, Naval Hospital Okinawa Public Affairs

**NAVAL HOSPITAL OKINAWA, Japan** - In April 2005, plans began for a cross cultural nursing exchange between Naval Hospital (NH) Okinawa and the Hokubu Nursing School of Nago, Japan. Those plans were enacted Aug. 2005 when two Japanese nursing students began working at the hospital under the instruction of American nurses.

Takahiro Chibana and Nanako Matayoshi were the first two Hokubu students to spend their summer break observing and learning the practical skills of U.S. nursing. The students reported to Camp Lester the first week of August and following two days of hospital orientation began their rounds in clinical areas like the medical-surgical ward, ambulatory procedure unit, couplet care, and the emergency department. In all, they will rotate through ten departments during the three-week program.

"I now have a widened vision of nursing from my exposure to U.S. style nursing," Chibana said after

two weeks of the program. "I am now more interested in the way the U.S. and other countries' nurses perform their duties."

The two students were selected from seven candidates, all of which were required to write an essay defining why they would be interested in working with American Navy nurses.

Toshiko Ikehara, Hokubu Nursing School director, explained that it not only took willingness on the students part, but also from the staff of NH Okinawa. "They really opened their hearts to us, showed us outstanding leadership and offered us an open welcome so the program would succeed," she explained.

Capt. Jan Carrio, director of nursing services NH Okinawa, echoed Ikehara's remarks with the excitement of incorporating a higher visibility for nursing island-wide. "This is an intercultural exchange to help each other learn for a better future. Our ultimate goal is to develop good nurses," she said.

According to Carrio, the hospital also benefited from the experience. "This program enhanced the Ameri-



**CAMP LESTER, Okinawa**, - Hokubu Nursing student Takahiro Chibana takes the vital signs of U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa, patient Deniece Thomas as Navy Lt. Martine Riché looks on. Chibana is one of two students who participated in a three-week-long cultural exchange to learn more about American nursing. U.S. Navy photo by Amanda M. Woodhead

can nurses' appreciation of the vast opportunities available to their nursing careers. They can see the benefit of the clinical education they have attained and the career development that is still available to them when compared with other cultures."

## Hospital Corpsman/Dental Technician Career Info on NKO

By Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Andrew Neville, Naval Medical Education and Training Command Public Affairs

**BETHESDA, Md.** - August 2005 marked the initial release of the Hospital Corpsman/Dental Technician (HM/DT) Online Career Fair on Navy Knowledge Online (NKO). Developed by the Naval Medical Education and Training Command (NMETC), the Online Career Fair educates junior Sailors about corpsman Navy Enlisted Classifications (NECs), highlighting the "critical" NECs first.

The fair provides information from multiple sites in one spot. The fair also directly supports one of the Surgeon General's top priorities of

"Shaping Tomorrow's Force" by training and retaining the right mix of health professionals. With this tool, corpsmen can make an informed career decision, while supporting the needs of Navy medicine.

The fair also enables HMs/DTs to reach out to someone senior in their area of interest. In the "Community of Practice" pages, a forum is provided allowing interaction with a senior member in the field, allowing Sailors to get the "real scoop" straight from the fleet.

"Ultimately, Sailors making informed decisions about their careers, based on facts and not rumors, is and always has been, the key to a successful career. The Online Career Fair is a great avenue for assisting the Sailor in mapping

out the best plan for themselves and the Navy," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Eliot Franklin, National Naval Medical Center Bethesda's Command Career Counselor.

According to Chief Hospital Corpsman (SS/SW/AW) Louis Gonzales, Undersea Independent Duty Corpsman Program Knowledge Manager, "The Career Fair will become a vital tool for all Sailors, especially in light of the HM/DT rating merger."

To use the fair, click on <https://www.nko.navy.mil/>, select "Force Health Protection" under Learning Centers, then on the left hand navigation bar select "Hospital Corps" and click on "Command Career Counselor".



## Naval Hospital's Blood Drive Gives Back to the Military

By Kelly Cundiff, Naval Hospital  
Cherry Point Public Affairs

**MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CHERRY POINT, N.C.** - Naval Hospital Cherry Point (NHCP) sponsored a Blood Drive as part of the Armed Services Blood Program Sept. 7.

Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point recently became one of the three Marine bases in eastern N.C. to conduct blood drives with the Navy Blood Donor Team based out of the Naval Hospital in Camp Lejeune. The blood collected from the drive is used to make various blood products to support the needs of active duty military, their dependents and retirees.

The Blood Donor Team is made up of military, civilian and contract employees from Camp Lejeune. The team set up a station on the third floor of the hospital that included a pre-screening questionnaire, donor information registration, vital signs

and hemoglobin check, and lastly, a phlebotomy area consisting of eight donor beds. Once a donation was complete, the donors were treated to snacks and beverages. T-shirts and jogging radios were also provided as a token of appreciation to those who donated. Cal Glazier, Donor Recruiter for Camp Lejeune, said "It usually takes between 5-15 minutes to donate with the average being around 10 minutes. The efficiency of the team has improved greatly since their start two years ago."

Lt. Les Riggs, department head of the laboratory at NHCP, initiated the program when he was stationed at Camp Lejeune. According to Riggs, after the events of Sept. 11, 2001, the Department of Defense's (DoD) stressed the need for blood donations. "Blood drives such as these will produce the blood needed in theaters of operation overseas. The blood that doesn't get sent overseas stands a good chance of

being used here at NHCP or Camp Lejeune," he said. "In some cases, the donor center at Camp Lejeune has even supplied some of the blood it has collected to assist Veterans Administration hospitals throughout N.C."

The goal for this blood drive was to collect 25 pints of blood. The Navy and Marine Corps spirit of "taking care of our own" prevailed and by the end of the drive, 42 pints had been collected, almost doubling the goal for the hospital. The hospital's military, civilian and contract personnel and even some Marine outpatients attending to their medical appointments stopped to donate, making this a successful event.

Glazier remarked that the drive was a definite success and that he hopes to make blood drives here at Naval Hospital Cherry Point a quarterly event.

## From the Front Lines to the Delivery Room

By Tammy Ragonese, Golden Eagle Staff Writer, Naval Air  
Station Lemoore, Calif.

**NAVAL HOSPITAL LEMOORE, Calif.** - When Hospital Corpsman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Any Brenes of Naval Hospital Lemoore woke up the morning of Aug. 2, she was excited. It was homecoming day for her husband, Hospital Corpsman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class (FMF) Manuel Brenes, who spent seven months serving on the frontlines with 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion 4<sup>th</sup> Marines in Iraq.

"This is one Navy couple that exemplifies Navy medicine. One serving at our hospital meeting peacetime mission and the other serving on the frontlines, meeting wartime mission," said Capt. Sandra DeGroot, commanding officer of Naval Hospital Lemoore.

Getting out of bed, she realized the baby she was carrying was giving her signs that she was ready to be born. "I didn't know what to think. The baby wasn't due for another nine days. I went to the hospital but was sent back home. I was told it was false labor," explained Any. "I just figured I was anxious about Manuel coming home."

Manuel, who began his drive home from 29 Palms that same morning, called Any to tell her he was on his way home. He couldn't wait to hold his 15-month-old son, Erik, and Any.

"Being a dual military family and being deployed in such harsh conditions really makes me appreciate all we

have here and how very important my family is. They are everything," said Manuel.

Although many corpsmen are serving in hospitals or on board ships, there are also those serving on the front lines supporting the Marine forces in the field. That is why Manuel was sent to Iraq in early January.

Surrounded by oppressive heat and sandstorms, Manuel was busy training the Iraqi Army and holding sick call, conducting inspections. The most dangerous part of the job for Manuel and others like him were the convoys into the heart of violence where insurgents were waiting to attack.

As each day passed by, Manuel was one day closer to being home. That day came on Tuesday, August 2.

After speaking to Any and learning she was in labor, Manuel drove into the Naval Air Station Lemoore Naval Hospital parking lot, he ran to the hospital doors, raced up the stairs and got there just as Any was prepped for a planned C-section.

Exactly 20 minutes after coming home, Manuel, by his wife's side, witnessed the birth of his baby daughter, Natalie Andrea Brenes.

"It was a long journey, but such a sweet end," said Manuel. "It hits me that I'm home again. I'm safe and secure and my family is complete."

## USNS Comfort Arrives in Gulf, Ready for Relief Support

By USNS Comfort Public Affairs

**PASCAGOULA, Miss.** - The Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) arrived at Pier Gulf's Bayou Casotte Terminal Sept. 10 to support hurricane relief efforts by providing medical support and humanitarian aid to victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Comfort brings with it unique capabilities for humanitarian relief missions, including helicopter lift capability, advanced medical equipment, a wide range of medical capabilities, berthing and personnel support, and logistical supply assets to support medical operations ashore.

Specific components of the ship's mission have not yet been determined due to the fluid nature of the relief effort. However, Comfort's leadership says the ship's crew remains flexible and ready for any task.

Comfort and its more-than-500-person crew are initially slated to function at a 250-bed capacity for

patient care. Should there exist a need to support a respite care role for relief workers, the ship's capabilities can be stretched to accommodate more than 700 beds.

In addition to the 59 Sailors and 63 civil service mariners who make up the reduced operating staff aboard the ship, the crew was augmented with Sailors from the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., as well as several other Navy Military Treatment Facilities across the eastern United States.

In preparation for the mission, Comfort loaded more than 245,000 pounds of supplies, including more than 48,000 bottles of water prior to departure from Baltimore, Md., Sept. 2.

The 894-foot ship then stopped in Mayport, Fla. en route to the Gulf Coast to receive more than 300 medical and support personnel, to load an additional \$800,000 of medical supplies including pharmaceuticals, intravenous fluids and vaccines, and took on \$3 million in



**PASCAGOULA, Miss.** - The Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), moors at the Port of Pascagoula. The ship will provide medical assistance to the victims of Hurricane Katrina in the region. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Michael B. Watkins

donated medical supplies from the Non-Governmental Organization, Project HOPE.

In coordination with other agencies, Navy and Marine Corps assets are continuing to provide assistance to displaced persons, medical aid for affected people, mobility and logistics support, as well as assistance in restoring other critical infrastructure and civil services.

## Navy Medical Laboratory Exceeding Standards

From Naval Health Care New England Public Affairs

**SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y.** — The laboratory at Naval Branch Health Clinic (NBHC) Saratoga Springs, NY, was inspected by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) Aug. 31.



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The laboratory continues its work in providing the best in laboratory medicine to its patients. The facility received both zero deficiencies and zero recommendations for improvements. The CAP inspector stated that she "would like to use the laboratory as a model of how to get it right" to both military and civilian medical sectors.

The laboratory accreditation by CAP is a voluntary, cyclical process involving on-site inspections, continuous monitoring of proficiency testing, self-inspections by lab staff, and other quality control activities. The process sets high standards for quality laboratory medicine and worker safety and provides regular monitoring of a facility's activities to help maintain those standards.

The laboratory made a voluntary commitment to exceed the quality standards set by CAP and other lab accrediting organizations and the federal government.

For a facility to receive accreditation by CAP, the inspectors examine the laboratory staff's education and qualifications, facility adequacy, equipment, work environment safety, and facility management to determine how well the laboratory is serving patients.

According to a NBHC laboratory staff member "This accomplishment is the result of the relentless pursuit of perfection and service to our patients by our lab staff members."